GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:863
ANSWERED ON:23.11.2000
MANUFACTURING OF SUB-STANDARD GUN BARREL BY FIELD GUN FACTORY
PRABHUNATH SINGH

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Field Gun Factory Kanpur has been guilty ofmanufacturing sub-standard 125 mm gun barrel for Main Battle Tank T-72 resulting in loss of about Rs. 52 crore as has been reported in the 'Hindustan' of September 16, 2000;

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon; and

(c) the steps being taken to ensure that such incidents do not recur?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) to (c): A Statement is attached.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 863 23.11.2000.

Indigenous manufacture of 125 mm gun barrels for Tank T-72 has been established during the mid 1980s in Ordnance Factories in accordance with the technology regime of the collaborators (erstwhile Soviet Union) and under supervision of the specialists of the collaborators. Wherever changes in process technology were made it was done in consultation with collaborators.

2. Till date 45 incidents of failure of barrels have been reported. These include 23 nos of imported origin (imported in early 80s) and 22 nos indigenously manufactured.

3. Investigations have been taken up in association with the Russian Specialists. Probable reasons for failure have been identified as lower tempering temperature and presence of trace elements in the metallurgical composition of the barrels.

4. As a matter of abundant caution, 559 nos of barrels including 62 nos already with the field units, tempered at lower temperatures, have been kept segregated for detailed investigations.

5. A committee comprising of specialists from Director General Quality Assurance, Ordnance Factory Board, Defence Research & Development Organisation and Mishra Dhatu Nigamis continuing intensive studies not only from the point of view of tempering temperatures but also covering metallurgical aspects to identify the causes of failure. So far 3 sample barrels of a particular metallurgical composition and tempered at temperature less than 500Â°C, test fired between Julyand Sep 2000 for life cycle, have withstood proof firing successfully.